

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections contained in the Office Action of May 11, 2006 is respectfully requested.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner set forth new prior art rejections of claims 18, 19, 21-25, 28, 29, 31-41, 43-45, and 47-51. However, the Examiner also indicated that dependent claims 26, 30, and 42 contain allowable subject matter. In view of this indication of allowable subject matter, the claims have now been amended as explained below.

Independent claim 18 has now been amended so as to incorporate the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 26 and intervening claim 24. In addition, independent claim 32 has been amended so as to incorporate the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 42. Finally, new independent claim 52 has been drafted to include the subject matter of original base independent claim 18 and allowable dependent claim 30. Therefore, because each of the presently-pending independent claims now include the subject matter of an allowable dependent claim, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 18, 32, and 52, and the claims that depend therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

Junichi KIMURA

By: 

W. Douglas Hahm
Registration No. 44,142
Attorney for Applicant

WDH\ck
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
August 11, 2006